



BRAND EXPERIENCE & EVENT DESIGN

IU International Minor

A minor suitable for highly motivated and internationally oriented students pursuing a future in branding or brand management, who want to learn how to emotionally engage people with a brand and ultimately make them fall in love with the brand

INFORMATION BOOKLET

content and design of the international minor 'Brand Experience & Event Design'

Minor Brand Experience & Event Design

Background

Today's consumer is looking for entertainment and (meaningful) experiences. Just advertising (saying who you are and what you do) no longer suffices for brands, brands need to make people experience what it is that they are about. Therefore, brands need to create brand experiences, and eye-catching and entertaining brand activations. There is a high demand for brand experts with knowledge and expertise in this area. The minor aims to educate students in the translation of brand strategy into meaningful experiences fitting the brand's essence and positioning, rather than the operational aspects of event organization and/or management.

The minor has been designed in accordance with the modern design principles of Utrecht university of applied sciences. Starting point is programmatic assessment (30ECTS test) where student produces evidence of having mastered the established learning outcomes at an adequate level. This requires a high level of independence and personal responsibility from the student with regard to self-starting skills and self-discipline. Student manages his/her own learning process, continuously and actively collecting feedback, feed forward and feed up. Students will have the opportunity to work on actual business cases within a reputable creative agency and field experts are involved in coaching and formative assessment. The education programme is construed according to the HILL method (High Impact Learning that Lasts) (Dochy & Segers, July 2020) therefore assessment is the basis for learning.



Table of Contents

Background.....	2
Introduction.....	4
Theoretical Framework	4
Learning output.....	5
Learning outcomes	5
Required Knowledge- and skills set.....	6
Decision moments & Data points.....	6
Education Programme.....	7
Design Principles of the minor	8
Programmatic assessment	8
High Impact Learning that Lasts (HILL):	9
Bibliography.....	11

Introduction

Branding and brand communication has shifted from transaction-oriented marketing to customer relationship marketing. The power and value of a brand are in the minds and hearts of the customers! Today's consumers are looking more and more for authenticity and above all want to experience. People often forget what a brand says or does, but they remember how a brand makes them feel. Brands need to engage with their customers to form unique connections and to secure their affections.

Experience marketing adds emotional value to a brand, touching the heart of the target group and encouraging them to take action. Empathizing with your (target) customers and putting the customer needs at the heart of your design, is key to creating meaningful experiences. On the other hand, brand marketers should really understand the core identity of their brand. They need to search for the soul in their brand, their brand essence or brand DNA. It is this intangible concept that makes customers relate to your brand and that sets your brand apart from the competitors.

In this minor students will learn how to design brand experiences and events that not only allow (future) customers to experience what the brand is about but encourage those customers to engage with the brand and ultimately fall in love with this brand. Students will become an expert at creating brand ambassadors and brand fans, driving brand awareness and long-term brand performance through a customer-centric strategy. The focus in this minor is on the use of brand experience and brand events as a strategic marketing tool for the building of brand equity.

Key words: experience marketing, experiential marketing, customer experience management, marketing communications, brand strategy (brand positioning, brand personality, brand attachment, brand love, brand community), brand design, brand events, customer-centric strategy

Theoretical Framework

Experiential marketing, also called 'engagement marketing', is a marketing strategy that invites an audience to interact with a business in a real-world situation. Using participatory, hands-on, and tangible branding material, the business can show its customers not just what the company offers, but what it stands for (Becker B., 2021). In short, experiential marketing enables consumers to not just buy products or services from a brand, but to actually experience the brand. Emotional connections between the brand and the consumer are created through memorable and unique experiences. Experiential marketing not only involves customer engagement, but also often improves it in the process (Salesforce, sd).

Brand experience is conceptualized as subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments (Brakus, et al., 2009). A brand experience can be broken down into four dimensions: Sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral (Brakus, et al., 2009). The sensory dimension involving brands promoting awareness of one or more of the five senses (hearing, sight, smell, touch,

and taste); the affective dimension being brands evoking feelings or sentiments; the intellectual dimension involving brands having the ability to make consumers think or feel curious; and the behavioral dimension referring to when a brand is being consumed, making the consumer act or feel a certain way (Wood, 2000). An additional social (relational) dimension was identified (Schmitt, et al., 2015), which is about “relating to others through the brand”.

Brand events and brand experience are both considered experiential marketing, but are used to achieve different goals, which is one of the reasons why it is so important to understand the difference between the two. Marketers turn to brand events (event marketing) when they want to announce a new product, sell products, or get press coverage for the brand. It is best to think of brand event (marketing) as a way to generate buzz around something happening with the brand. Of course, brand experiences can also be used to launch new products, sell merchandise, and get in the press, but those are not typically the goals of these experiences. Instead, marketers use brand experiences to create positive brand associations and grow relationships with their audience. An increase in sales and awareness of a new product can certainly occur as a result of an experiential marketing event, but the focus during the planning process is usually on how to connect with consumers (factory 360, 2017).

Brand Experience: experience contributes to enhancing visitor loyalty – building relationships (creating ambassadors) – long-term result

Brand Events: an event is a means to achieve a goal – direct result (shorter term)

Learning output

Student can design and create meaningful experiences or events around the core values of a brand, appropriate to the positioning of the brand and distinctive from the competition, resulting in interaction between brand and target group, enhancing long-term loyalty and emotional bonding, ensuring brand performance and build brand equity.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the minor the student demonstrates the following learning outcomes at a proficient level:

DBE Designing Brand Experiences:

Student creates unique, brand appropriate, customer centric experiential marketing strategies for any brand, in order to achieve short-term activation and/or long-term engagement and loyalty;

CT Creative Thinking skills:

Student demonstrates creative thinking in project approach, interaction, collaboration, and elaboration of final solution and/or brand experience;

RP Reflective Practitioner:

Student demonstrates the necessary reflective skills to facilitate the iterative and incremental design process;

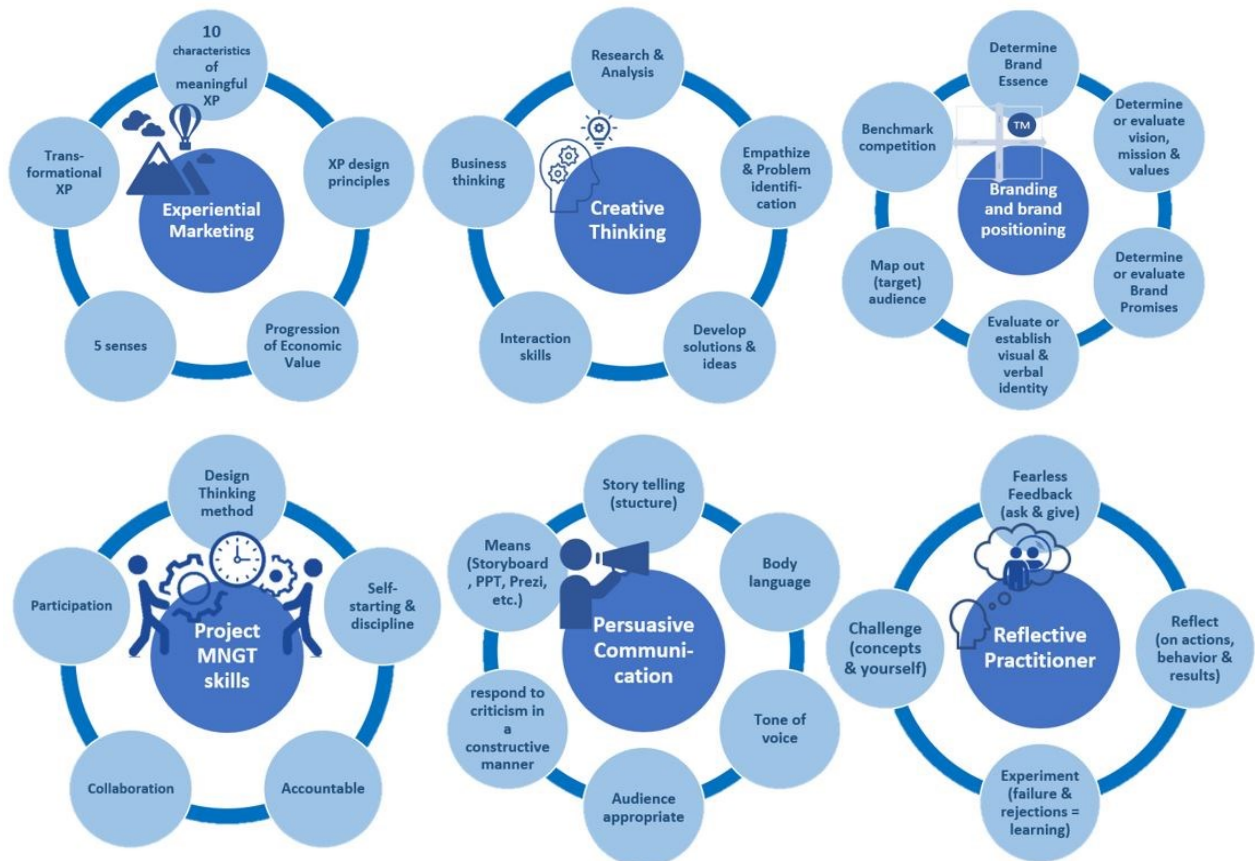
PM Project Management:

Student applies Design Thinking methods, and demonstrates self-starting skills, and individual accountability;

PC Persuasive Communication skills:

Student exhibits the necessary persuasive communication skills and successfully convinces, persuades, entuses, and involves stakeholders.

Required Knowledge- and skills set



Decision moments & Data points

At the end of the minor student hands in a portfolio with evidence to demonstrate that the student has individually mastered at an adequate level the knowledge, skills and attitudes within the established learning outcomes. Student collects proof from data points in the learning process; e.g. assignments, partial assignments, challenges, feedback from peers, lecturers, instructors, field coaches, clients etc. to demonstrate that the required level and learning outcomes have been achieved.

After Arches 1 and 2, around weeks 6 and 12, there are mid-term reviews and evaluations to provide student with feed up and feed forward. How is student doing? Burden of proof, what does the student have to do to be able to prove learning outcome.

Examples of data points:

- Exercises;

- Completed assignments;
- Completed challenges;
- Case-studies and field work;
- Reflections on learning process;

Education Programme

The minor has a decreasing intensity of guided work sessions. In the initial period there are more lessons and towards the end students mainly work independently on their assignment. Throughout the minor, students will have weekly coaching sessions in smaller groups, during which (individual) progress and learning process is discussed.

Arch 1 ‘Cover the basics’

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
General Introduction ‘Creating Connections’	How creative are you? Create Brand ‘YOU’	‘YOU’ in Wonderland Create XP ‘YOU’	Introduction tool Design Thinking	Recap ‘What are the basics?’

During Arch 1 students are brought to a basic knowledge and skill level. Assignments, exercises and challenges follow each other in rapid succession in pressure cooker style to teach students the theoretical framework and to let them experiment how models and concepts can be applied. Students are continuously challenged outside of their comfort zone to acquire new knowledge and to learn and improve new skills. The work sessions are intended for inspiration and extra explanation, students work on the assignments, exercises and challenges independently, individually or in groups, outside of the scheduled work sessions. Attendance at work sessions is not mandatory, but highly recommended; The pace is very high and the risk of lagging behind and/or missing the connection to content or group is therefore high.

Arch 2 ‘Test-drive your design skills & build on your basics’

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Introduction Arch 2 ‘Teaming up’	Empathize & Define phase	Ideation phase	Prototyping & Testing	Final Prototype & Pitch

During Arch 2 students have the opportunity to test-drive their acquired knowledge and skills from arch 1 on actual business cases together with the field coaches from our partnering creative agencies. These agencies are reputable Dutch and international creative agencies that work with international well-known major brands, and the field coaches are the senior strategists and/or managing directors of these agencies. Students will work in project teams and spend at least one day per week at the agency to work with their field coach on their assigned business case. The other scheduled work sessions are again intended for inspiration or extra explanation and also to involve students in each other’s business cases, approaches and progress in order to learn from each other’s experiences. Student project teams will work on solving their business case mainly outside of their scheduled work sessions. Students are expected to exhibit a professional attitude and working method when collaborating with the creative agencies.

Arch 3 'The Real Deal'

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Introduction Arch 3 'Your brief'	Empathize & Define phase	Ideation phase	Prototyping & Testing	Final Prototype & Pitch

In Arch 3 students will receive an actual brief from an actual client, presenting an issue that students will need to solve with their student project team. This final assignment will challenge the student teams to apply the knowledge and skills that they have acquired in the previous weeks to research, analyze, generate solutions, develop creative concepts and finally pitch their proposed solution to the client.

Design Principles of the minor

Programmatic assessment

Programmatic assessment is a holistic approach that looks at the entire development of a student. The intended learning outcomes of the programme form the starting point on which decisions (summative assessment) are based and the development of the student is continuously followed (formative assessment). This guarantees the reliability of the final fail/pass decision and at the same time stimulates the learning process of the individual students.

A so-called mix of data points (such as assignments, exercises, reflection reports, peer evaluations, professional tasks, etc.) provides insight into the individual development of a student. The learning process is stimulated by the fact that these data points are not awarded with credits, but are intended to collect feedback. That means students are allowed to make mistakes and use feedback to learn and improve themselves. The data points thus facilitate the dialogue between student and teacher about the individual learning progress of the student. By evaluating the data points, learning outcomes are tested several times without a decision being linked to them; The final decision pass/fail is only given when sufficient data points have been collected to ensure a reliable assessment.

Student manages his/her own learning process, continuously and actively collecting feedback, feed forward and feed up. The role of the teacher is much more that of a coach than that of an expert who transfers knowledge. Students are mainly addressed on their own active role in discovering, researching and applying knowledge themselves. This requires a high degree of involvement, ambition, independence and initiative from students.

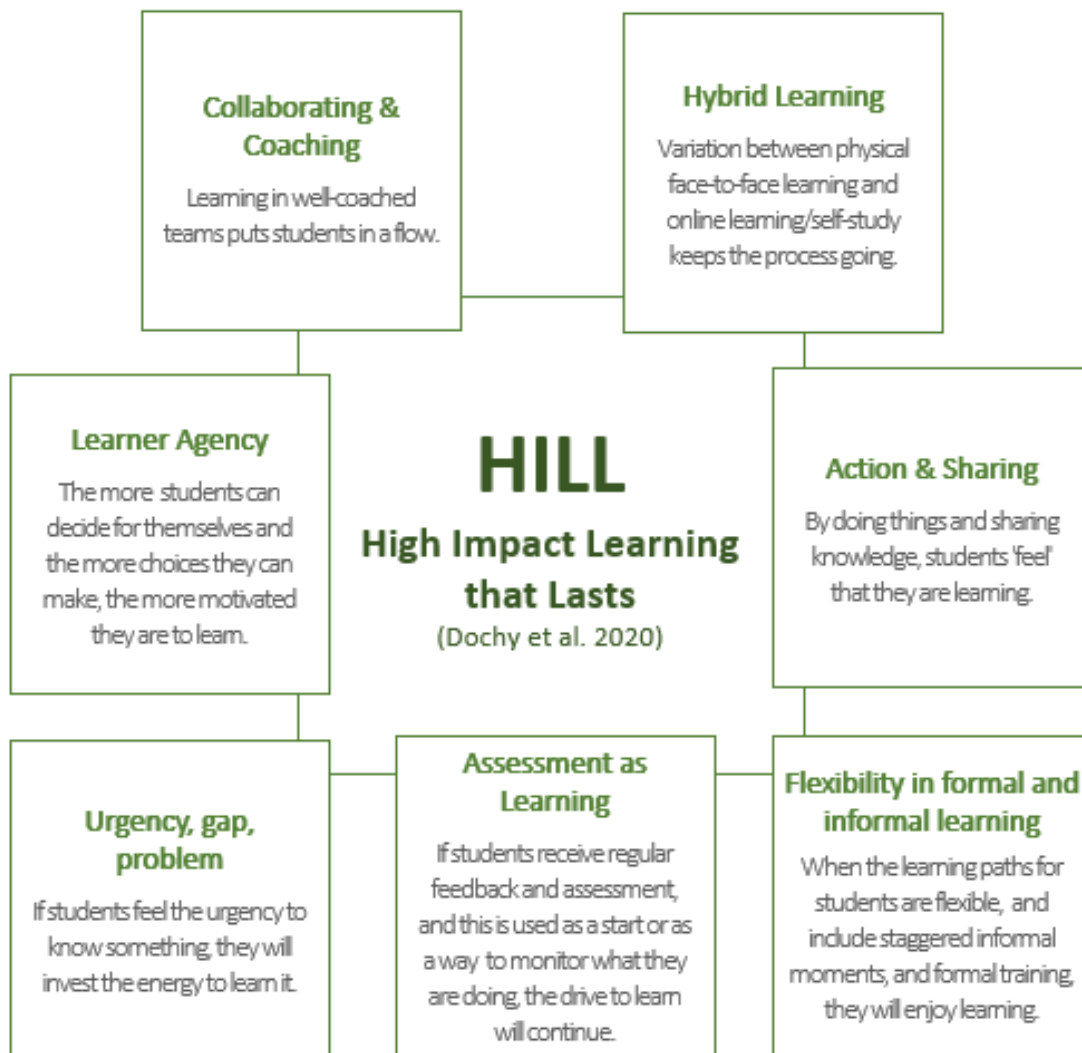
'THE 6 PRINCIPLES OF PROGRAMMATIC TESTING

- *Insight into the development of the student is created by a mix of different data points*
- *Each data point is focused on feedback and has no fail decision*
- *The learning outcomes form the backbone of the assessment programme*
- *There is a constant dialogue about the use of feedback for self-management*
- *The number of data points and the severity of the decision are proportionally related*
- *The gravity of the decision is leading to the amount of required evaluator expertise'*

(Platform leren van toetsen, sd -> translated via Word Translator)

High Impact Learning that Lasts (HILL):

7 building blocks for high impact learning that lasts:



Urgency, gap, problem: Starting point are challenging assignments to get started. These assignments should help students to draw up their learning goals; Why did you choose this minor and what do you want to have learned at the end? Furthermore these assignments should fill a gap in knowledge, involve 'problem owner' or client to make the urgency for the client clear, and require consumer research to demonstrate the theory (visit reality). Finally the conclusion of the assignment should facilitate a discussion on what has been learned because only in reflection there is really learning.

Learner Agency: Student is in the lead and determines what he/she wants to learn or achieve. It is important to explicitly look back on actions, and to think about what you can do differently (dare to take a different approach). This involves reflecting after an action, but also during an action. Being able and willing to steer requires a flexible attitude, in which the learner can influence the environment to act differently. It also requires taking responsibility for one's own learning and acting professionally. Student actively collects feedback on task

and process to gain insights in own development. We stimulate a culture in which making mistakes is allowed. Students will learn by doing, through trial and error.

Collaboration & Coaching: This method stimulates team learning, aiming for a shared vision on task at hand, the context, task cohesion, joint commitment and motivation to work on a task as a team. Students are encouraged to create a positive interdependence (win-win instead of competition), and to display personal leadership in the division of roles within the team.

Within the education programme, ample attention is paid to group process and stimulating successful team collaborations. Introduction, drawing up shared vision and development plan with a focus on coaching, team learning and stimulating knowledge sharing.

Hybrid learning: Learning is a continuous process, not an event, in which various sources and methods are used (for example, a combination of online learning, face-to-face learning and workplace learning, or the combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning).

Action & Knowledge Sharing: It is important that students learn actively, and together with others. We stimulate learning by doing and encourage peer discussion and interaction. Students should mainly apply knowledge in real-life or simulated situations, or in practice itself. The sharing of knowledge should take place 'just in time', at the moment that knowledge has to be applied to solve a problem, for example. As stated before, students are allowed to make mistakes and get feedback, because 'correcting mistakes' is 'just an acceptable part of learning'.(Dochy et al., 2020)

Flexibility in formal and informal learning: You cannot plan everything in advance within an "engaging learning environment". Learning also takes place partly by chance, informally and not organized. According to Dochy (2020), spontaneous learning is motivating. You should design learning environments in such a way that more opportunities for informal learning arise. Think of many interaction opportunities from which spontaneous self-organized learning activities can arise. Through a portfolio, learners can then record what they have learned

Assessment as learning: Students should above all be confirmed in what he/she can do, to stay motivated. Stress moments are not learning moments, and therefore continuous assessment is part of the learning process. Students will put together a portfolio in which they demonstrate the learning outcomes and their personal growth. During the assessment we check and celebrate the sustainability of what students have learned. There is attention to process and talents and feedback from peers, lecturer, field experts and clients, is of great importance.

Bibliography

- Becker, B. (2021, August 16). *14 Examples of Experiential Marketing Campaigns That'll Give You Serious Event Envy*. Retrieved March 8, 2022, from Hubspot: <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-experiential-marketing-campaigns>
- Brakus, J. J., J., Schmitt, B., & Zarantonello, L. (2009, May). Brand Experience: What is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 52-68.
- Dochy, F., & Segers, M. (July 2020). *Bouwstenen voor High Impact Learning, Van model naar praktische tips en succescriteria* (2e ed.). Amsterdam: Boom Uitgevers.
- factory 360. (2017, February 20). *Experiential Marketing vs. Event Marketing: What's the Difference?* Retrieved from factory360: <https://factory360.com/experiential-marketing-vs-event-marketing-whats-the-difference/>
- Platform leren van toetsen. (n.d.). *Alles over programmatisch toetsen*. Retrieved April 25, 2022, from Leren van toetsen: <https://lerenvantoetsen.nl/programmatisch-toetsen/>
- Salesforce. (n.d.). *What Is Experiential Marketing and Why Is It so Critical?* Retrieved from salesforce.com: <https://www.salesforce.com/products/marketing-cloud/best-practices/experiential-marketing/>
- Schmitt, B., Brakus, J., & Zarantonello, L. (2015). From Experiential Psychology to Consumer Experience. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 25, 166-171.
- Wood, L. (2000). Brands and brand equity: definition and management. *Management Decision*, 38 (9), 662-669.